

noon of January 31, 1885, I met Mr. Hitchcock, and together we went to the place where he saw the Sparrows on December 29, and also to the one in which they were found by Mr. Lamb in January, 1883.* Quite near the latter locality were the fresh and only partly frozen remains of a Sparrow (an undoubted *Melospiza palustris*, as I afterward made sure by comparison) which had evidently been killed by a Shrike.

From the above it would appear almost certain that the birds were present during the entire month of January, and it is very probable that they might have escaped my notice when I looked for them later. If the original flock consisted of only four there could not have been more than two left for me to find, and in the tangled underbrush, which, in one swampy place at least, extends over several acres, they might easily have eluded me.

I have always considered that any species found here in January was an undoubted winter resident, and its presence at any date during that month sufficient proof of this. Mr. William Brewster tells me that he considers the autumnal migration ended here by December 25, and January, the one winter month when all birds (except such erratic species as Crossbills, Pine Grosbeaks, etc.) are settled for a brief period. If January is not accepted as the test month it will be almost impossible to determine our rarer winter residents, for early in February some of our most hardy spring birds often begin to arrive.

It seems to me it is unsafe to say that "it is hardly possible that Swamp Sparrows passed the winter in Massachusetts in a season so rigorous as was that of 1884-'85 after the middle of January," for there are numerous instances recorded of the wintering of certain birds far north of their usual habitat at that season, even during exceptionally cold winters.† The warm and open character of the winter of 1884-'85 previous to January 18 might also have caused the birds to establish themselves in a locality which they would have been unwilling or unable to leave later.

I think it is almost equally certain that the Yellow-rumped Warblers were also wintering at Pine Point, Maine, as they do regularly at Milton, Mass. (only about ninety miles south), where I have found them every winter for a number of years.—ARTHUR P. CHADBOURNE. *Cambridge, Mass.*

Note on the capture of *Coturniculus lecontei* and *Dendroeca kirtlandi* within the city limits of St. Louis, Mo.—Leconte's Sparrow, male, was taken April 1, 1885, on dry ground in a prairie overgrown with coral-berry bushes (*Symphoricarpos*). The earliness of the date seems to be remarkable. Another specimen, in the collection of Mr. Hurter, was taken in

* Journ. Boston Zool. Soc., 11 (1883), p. 32.

† I find that the following southern species have been recorded from Eastern Massachusetts during the very cold winter of 1882-83:—Flock of six *Sialia sialis* (Job, Bulletin Nuttall Club, VIII, 1883, p. 149); two *Molothrus ater* (Speiman, *ibid.*, p. 121); and a *Dendroeca pinus* (Brewster, *ibid.*, p. 120). See also Auk, 1, 1884, pp. 294, 295, and Bulletin Nuttall Club, IV, 1879, p. 118.

this vicinity November 10, 1878. These dates may serve to show that the species is a pretty early spring- and a late fall-migrant. In regard to its habits I can only repeat what others have said again and again, namely that it is a great hider. My attention was called to the bird by a low call not unlike the characteristic chirp of the Song Sparrow, but peculiarly sharp and shrill. Going for the bird, it darted out from one bush into another, a distance of about ten yards. I saw it alight in the middle of the bush on the ground and determined to watch the little stranger. I kept my eyes fixed on him for fully ten minutes, but he remained motionless and silent, and his patience seemed unimpaired when mine was all gone.

The capture of *Dendroica kirtlandi*, male, May 8, 1885, is worthy of special mention, as it is the first record of its occurrence west of the Mississippi River. It may also be new to learn that this Warbler is in its general ways mostly like *D. palmarum*. It flew up from the ground on the River des Pires, a few yards from the water, and alighted behind a bush a few feet from the ground. One glance at the bird was sufficient to tell me that it was a Kirtland's Warbler; such a peculiar looking bird it is. Concealing myself I watched the bird for a few minutes, and found that its habits seem to be terrestrial, that it has the *same wagging motion* of the tail as the Yellow Redpole, but that in the carriage of its body and in the manner of evading discovery by skilfully alighting behind a protecting object it resembles *Oporornis*.—OTTO WIDMANN, *St. Louis, Mo.*

On the Feeding Habits of *Phalænoptilus nuttalli*.—Just without the picket fence that encloses in part the parking of my present residence at Fort Wingate, New Mexico, then runs a wide board-walk. Beyond this is a broad, well-kept gravel road, standing between the former and an open level plot of ground of about an acre's extent. For a number of evenings past my neighbors have tried to induce me to come out and see a strange-acting bird that disported itself in this roadway, between twilight and dark. I paid little heed to this, as from its description I believed it to be the half-grown young of the *Chordeiles* of this region, which is very abundant in the neighborhood. Last night, however, the bird having been described to me as a small Owl with a white throat, by one of its observers, I took my cane-gun and made a search for it up and down the road-way. I had not far to go, when, as well as I could see by the light of a very young moon, I noticed a small, dark-brownish looking bird apparently amusing himself by making short jumps of two feet or more up in the air, then resting on the road to repeat the performance in a moment or so. Another was going through similar capers on the broad walk. They seemed to be perfectly oblivious to my presence, and, indeed, some children further along were trying to catch them with their hands. As I had never heard the note of the Poor-wills in the vicinity, it did not strike me at first that it might be this bird; moreover, its action was so odd that I hardly knew what to make of it. At any rate one soon noiselessly lit, like a great, gray moth, directly in front of me in the road, but a few feet distant. It was extremely difficult to see him, and it was more